

# SOCIAL ACTION



DECEMBER 1957

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# SOCIAL ACTION

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DECEMBER 1957

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## *This Side and That*

### **Social Christmastide**

Among the powwows which will enliven Madras during the week following Christmas, the Catholic Social Conference should be singled out. International congresses are necessary, All-India meetings are useful, but community gatherings are possibly the most realistic. International and national eloquence has become a prosperous industry, but family conversation is a craft that should not be neglected; it is as essential as cottage industry by the side of nationalised or internationalised undertakings. Universal brotherhood is a splendid feeling, but it should be tested with the touchstone of neighbourliness; I am told there are five hundred million Chinese and I am prepared to gather them all in a gigantic embrace; if tomorrow I am informed there are six hundred millions, I am ready to take in the extra hundred millions in the same gesture; they are all so comfortably far away. The precept "Love thy neighbour" is singularly more difficult because more realistic; love the one next to you, the one whose life impinges on yours

day after day, the one whom you can reach or who may be in your way ; that, and that above all, is the touchstone of brotherly love.

Moreover in the complexity of Indian conditions, minorities have particular problems which demand attention if they have to be solved in the larger background of national and international peace and prosperity. Among such problems may be listed inter-communal relations, diversity of avocations, migratory labour and its educational and economic complications, organisation of social training, etc. Some of these problems will receive the attention of the Catholic social workers who will meet at the Catholic Centre, Madras, whilst they will have the opportunity of attending the Indian Conference of Social Work.

### ***Industrial Prosperity***

On the initiative of the Indian Labour Conference, a Standing Labour Committee was formed to draft a Code of Industrial Discipline ; representatives of the Government, employers and employees came to conclusions which are to be ratified by the end of December and which augur well for civic peace. All disputes will be settled by negotiation, conciliation or voluntary arbitration ; lockouts, go-slow tactics and strikes will be avoided ; complaints about non-observance of the Code in any unit will be investigated, discussed and settled by suitable machinery established at all levels by the Central and State governments on a tripartite basis. There will also be provision for shunting part of any bonus to the provident fund of any worker receiving more than Rs. 75 a month.

Moreover a steering committee is investigating the factors required for determining a fair wage in all industries, on the basis of production costs, profits, levels of living and fluctuations in the national economy. All such measures should go a long way to create a climate in which industrial development can best proceed and secure the success of our Five Year plans.

The above measures will certainly encourage the regular flow of foreign loans and aid which is essential. It is also expected that the oratorical industry, which political leaders do develop outside any plan will be submitted to a code of self-discipline, will not hinder progress by provoking untimely lockouts of foreign goodwill.

### ***The Kerala Satellite***

We are told by the Premier that with the launching of the earth-satellite we should think in a "new ethical dimension". Indeed with the development of more and more effective weapons of mass destruction, the need of ethical preoccupations has become more acute than ever. Ideologies and the choice of ideologies are a crucial problem of the day. The Premier's was a timely caution that should shake out of their somnolence those who in the past showed little care for ideologies and even boasted they had no ideology.

One main trouble lies in assaying Communist ideology. In our ordinary democracies, one would put as a basic tenet the respect for every single human person. Not so in what are, with unconscious tautology, called "people's democracies"; with these the

sole basic tenet is party success. Lenin told the Russian Youth Communist League (October 2, 1920) : " We say that our morality is entirely subordinated to the interests of the class-struggle of the proletariat. Our morality is deduced from the class-struggle of the proletariat ".

In other words, the ABC of the Communist Party's rule of conduct is success ; what helps the Party's success, that, and that alone, is ethical, what succeeds, and that alone, is true. Of course the path to success is not always a straight line ; in the Red ethical dimension, the straight line is not the shortest distance ; often enough it involves zigzags. In the words of Lenin, the ascent to success is normally in zigzags. That is what we see in Kerala to-day ; any Minister makes a zig, one is sure that the Chief Minister will follow with a zag ; the zigzag makes for the goal, which at present is power and continuation in power, so that " enabling laws " can be passed which will facilitate the ascent to the nationalisation of the economy. After they passed an educational bill which proved alarming to minorities, they staged a bout of constitutional loyalty ; they wink at labour trouble in foreign-owned estates, but they are warmly inviting foreign capital ; they rush to seek advice in Moscow, and then make a pilgrimage to New Delhi. All that makes true Leninist zigzags. It is a pathological mania with them, and naive is the one who expects any straightening of their ethical dimension.

A. L.

## *Some Recent Strikes*

With the inception of the Second Five Year Plan, and the concentrated attempt on the development of heavy industry by the Government, strikes are becoming almost a daily occurrence in the industrial life of the country. Recently there was the Post and Telegraph strike, then in Bombay there was the Municipal Employees strike, and now there is the threatened strike of one of the Railway Workmen's Federations which numbers nearly three lakhs of workers. Meanwhile in Bengal the Bank employees have already struck work, and are continuing their strike. Outside the fold of the industrial working class, these strikes and threats of strikes are viewed by the public with growing suspicion and alarm. The threatened strike of the Post and Telegraph employees unnerved the country and its leaders. Quick and safe communication within a subcontinent like India is of the utmost necessity and when in Bombay the Hospital employees went on strike and refused to help the sick and dying, public sympathy was further estranged from the striking workers, whatever the justice of their cause.

All the same, it is important to realise that the industrial unrest in the country on so large a scale needs to be tackled in the right way if it is not to spread. Mere suppression of the strike by legal enactment may quell the passion for securing a fair deal for some period of time, but the sense of injustice that has been provoked and frustrated will force its way out under some other form unless in the meantime measures have been taken to appease the workers.

***Demands***

The Federal Council of the National Federation of P & T Employees determined to go on strike from the 8th August, 1957, unless their demands were granted. They demanded the immediate appointment of a Pay Commission to enquire into and report on the entire conditions of service of the P & T workers, especially the wage structure, and other allowances and suggest possible changes in these. The recruitment policy of the Department should make full provision for adequate staff and fair methods of promotion. It was further required to outline the machinery for settling grievances between the workers and the Government, determine the Trade Union and Civic rights of the P & T employees, and fix a definite date from when their recommendations were to have effect. In the meantime before the Report of the Pay Commission was published and its implementation was effected, the Federation demanded the merger of the Dearness Allowance with basic pay and other allowances remuneration and benefits to be calculated on the whole amount, the Dearness Allowance itself being fixed and regulated according to the recommendations of the previous Central Pay Commission. Rules in the matter of leave, medical attention, pension and travelling allowances for Class III employees were to be made applicable to Class IV. In respect of holidays, weekly offs, night co-efficient and working hours the employees of the P & T Department were to receive the same advantage as other Central Government employees. Payment to the Extra Departmental staff was to be made at the same rates for the same number of working hours as other employees of the P & T.



Finally, the Assam allowance was to be paid to all P & T employees in the Assam area and no victimatisation was to occur to workers of the Assam area who had gone on strike in February, 1957.

### ***Government and the P & T employees***

The Minister for Communications, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, in response to the demands of the Federation made a statement in the Lok Sabha in which he emphasised that the financial implications of the demands were more than the country could bear in the prevailing stringent monetary conditions since the Second Five Year Plan was already running into difficulties because of the lack of foreign exchange. But he maintained that some of the demands had already been met by the Government. There had been a liberalisation of pension rules for members of Class IV, some conclusions had been arrived at by the Government regarding the Assam compensatory allowance, the avenues of promotion had been enlarged, certain pay scales of lower grade employees had been raised, relations of incapacitated employees of the P & T would be given special preference in recruitment, the night co-efficient had been liberalised. He promised that a Standing Committee would be set up to provide machinery for negotiation and speedy settlement of disputes, and a National Welfare Board to draw up a comprehensive plan for their welfare. He therefore advised the federation to adopt more fruitful methods of negotiation, and give up the strike.

In the course of the discussion on the appointment of a Pay Commission in Parliament, the Finance

Minister seemed to agree that such a Commission could be appointed for all Central Government employees, but he did not mention the terms of reference or the composition of the Committee. This led to further enquiries by the Federation as to what the Finance Minister had precisely proposed, but no answer was forthcoming from Government circles or the Labour Ministry. In the meantime the employees held to their determination to go on strike.

### ***The Prime Minister***

The representatives of the Federation then met the Prime Minister but failed to achieve any substantial agreement as a result of the interview. All that the Prime Minister could do was to accede to their request for an Enquiry Commission but interim relief he said was out of the question, because of the difficult position through which the country was passing. On these grounds, he later condemned the strike as essentially anti-social and a threat to the welfare of the country.

### ***Commission of Enquiry***

However later on August 3rd, the Finance Minister announced the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry. Its terms of reference were to examine the principles which should govern the structure of emoluments and conditions of service of Central Government employees. It had then to recommend desirable and feasible changes in the structure of wages and conditions of service of the different classes of Central Government employees, keeping in view the historical background, the economic conditions of

the country, the requirements of the Second Plan, and the disparities created between the employees of the Central Government and those of the States and local bodies by these changes.

At the same time the Home Minister introduced into the Lok Sabha the Maintenance of Essential Services Bill which empowered Government to declare certain strikes illegal and making participation in or aiding such strikes a penal offence.

The Minister for Communication later assured the Federation that the Government was willing to refer interim relief to the Commission and would soon come to a decision in regard to the Assam Compensatory allowance and promotions. But the Federation considered these promises too vague and requested the fixing of a specific dateline and that the interim relief should be paid from the day the Commission was appointed. But they persisted in their determination to go on strike. In a broadcast to the nation the Prime Minister said that the Essential Services Bill would be withdrawn if the strike was called off, but maintained that the Pay Commission would consider the Federation's demands keeping in mind the interests of the whole country. The Bill was passed by the Lok Sabha despite strong criticism and a walk-out by the Opposition.

The passing of the Bill was a serious blow to the Federation's prestige and strength. Immediately hurried consultations were held by the members and the

political parties with whom they were allied. Finally the Joint Council of the Federation withdrew their decision to strike.

### ***Achievements***

Despite the fact that in the end the strike had to be withdrawn and no real trial of strength took place between the contending parties, the P & T employees were able to bring their grievances vividly before the public mind. The economic reason behind the strike was the expectation of higher wages in a situation where prices are rising. The employees complained that during the First Five Year Plan they had tightened their belts in an effort to share the hardships of a greatly increased national investment policy. But since the First Plan had ended with a rise in productivity of 20%, they felt that they had some right to share in the gains. This is a common enough argument on the part of all workers. But it would not have arisen had not prices also increased in the meanwhile. Somehow the rise in the national expenditure over the new industrial developments has led to inflationary trends and essential commodities seem to be in short supply. So it is only natural that industrial labour being the best organised group should be more vocal in bringing its demands to the notice of its employers especially when they are the Government itself. Industrial labour today is conscious of its rights and its combined strength. This is a new feeling and like every adolescent who glories in his first sensation of independence Indian industrial labour reacts true to type in the indiscriminate use of the strike. It is not that Indian labour

loves to go on strike, but it is this first taste of a new found power that urges the men to express their independence of their bosses.

On the other hand, while the demands were legitimate the Unions in India are hampered by the lack of the possibility of bargaining collectively with their employers, especially when that employer is the Government. Of course the Indian Government showed itself remarkably moderate and patient in dealing with the representatives of the Federation. There is no doubt that the exigencies of financing the Second Five Year Plan have now become a nightmare for the Central Cabinet. And if over a crore of rupees will have to be paid out in increased wages to P & T staff as a result of the demands, any employer would pause twice before he could agree to such a step. The Minister for Communications yielded on various points. In fact the Federation did succeed to a large extent in compelling the Government to meet their demands. For instance, the Pay Commission has been appointed. It will consider the merging of the Dearness Allowance with basic pay as part of the Interim relief demanded by the Federation. The Assam Compensatory Allowance has practically been granted. All the other matters will be referred to the Commission.

But the passing of the Maintenance of Essential Services Bill came in for bitter criticism by all the Unions as a practical denial of the fundamental right to strike. Was it necessary for the Government to pass such an extreme measure normally applied only in times of war or other great national crisis? Perhaps the

Government as a new employer is apt to panic at the first signs of concerted opposition. There are ways of dealing with the unions which will have to be slowly learned from experience. Sincerity and an open mind are not enough ; there must also be an effort at compromise and a readiness to see each other's difficulties with unprejudiced eyes. But the political parties, especially the Communist Party, were deeply interested in the threatened strike. At first the Communist Party backed the strikers and questioned the Government in the Lok Sabha on the causes of the strike. The Party members staged a walk out when the Essential Services Bill was passed. All the same they immediately counselled the Federation representatives to withdraw the strike on the grounds that the Government had yielded to certain of their demands. Why this inconsistency in policy ? Obviously they expected the strike to fizzle out in no time and so preferred to withdraw from their previous position beforehand. It is true that B. N. Ghosh, the General Secretary of the Federation, is a non-party man but all the same during the anxious days preceding the strike, the union naturally turned for support to those who were ready to side with its claims. In the heat of battle, non-alignment is no easy matter ; however the company with which one consorts even through pressure of circumstances somehow leaves its effects after the event has passed.

### ***The Municipal Strike in Bombay***

This strike was sponsored by the Municipal Mazdur Union, and its General Secretary, George Fernandes, belongs to the Lohia Group of the Socialist Party.

Among its demands, the Union claimed to be the representative union of the workers since it had more than half the working force in the Municipality on its membership role, and therefore desired recognition by the Municipality. It also demanded merger of half the Dearness Allowance with the basic wage. As a matter of fact these demands were at first granted by the majority party in the Municipality, the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti, and it was agreed that the demands would be implemented within six weeks.

In the meanwhile, one of the office bearers of the Union, a cook in one of the Municipal Hospitals, was suspended for gathering subscriptions for an unrecognised union. This was the proximate cause of the strike which spread from the hospital to other municipal hospitals and then became a general strike of Municipal employees within four days. The Union demanded that the cook be re-instated and other outstanding demands of the workers be granted.

There is no doubt that the strike was well organised and given wide publicity. How long the strike would have lasted had the Samiti adamantly refused to deal with the strikers is difficult to say. But the refuse and the stench in most of Bombay's fairly well kept localities turned the tide in favour of the workers. The Samiti leaders finally agreed to cancel the suspension order of the cook, to merge half the dearness allowance with basic pay, to give the union *de facto* recognition, and not to victimise any worker for taking part in the strike.

### **Analysis**

There are certain aspects of the strike which are unusual. In the first place, the strike was what might be termed a 'lightning strike'. No strike notice was given, nor were the usual proceedings of conciliation and negotiation prescribed by the Industrial Disputes Act accepted. Secondly the Samiti itself is composed of veteran trade union leaders and that may be one reason why the strike was so quickly successful. However the attitude of the actual authorities in charge of the various Municipal undertakings seems to have been one of animosity against the Union and the majority party in the Municipality was not strong enough to overrule this opposition. Thirdly, the Union is led by members of the Socialist Party of India. It is said that this party suffers from a bitter sense of frustration over its almost total defeat at the polls during the last elections. All the same one should not condemn offhand the motives of these leaders in conducting the strike. There is no doubt that while prices rise, wages tend to stick at the same level. And the act of suspending the cook was certainly too drastic and highhanded. In these days when workers are so conscious of their rights and their power, any management, Government or private, should treat the worker with some respect and understanding. Sometimes the behaviour of local authorities can be exceedingly embarrassing for their superiors. Lastly, the strike pertained to an essential service, one in which the safety and the health of the people were concerned.

The public reacted badly to the desertion of patients in the hospitals by the striking workers. It



was a big mistake for the Union leaders not to have taken some measures to alleviate the distress of the sick. It is a fact today that though the public is aware of the economic and social difficulties under which employees in the low income group labour, yet they are expected to consider the common welfare. The Union leaders could well have publicised the fact that though they had the right to call the hospital workers on strike, they had still refrained from doing so out of a sense for the public welfare. This gesture would have won for them much greater sympathy from the people. Public opinion has a large part to play in the success or the failure of a strike, and union leaders should not forget this.

### ***The Railwaymen's Threatened Strike***

The National Council of Action of the All-India Railwaymen's Federation have threatened to go on strike unless the Federation is given recognition by the Railway Ministry and the demands of the Unions for payment of interim relief, full neutralisation of the cost of living, a basic revision of the basic scales of pay and the setting up of a wage board be accepted. According to the Council, over 97% of the votes cast in the strike ballot had been in favour of the strike. Some 200,000 members had voted in this ballot, which was exclusively of the Southern Railway. This revealed the strength the All-India Railwaymen's Federation. Its leader is Mr. Guruswamy, a trade unionist of long standing.

The Government reaction to the threat of the strike on the Railways was to urge the Union leaders

to make their peace with the recognised union led by Mr. Vasavda, who is President of the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen. But Mr. Guruswamy repudiates the National Federation as a Government union. He prefers a free democratic trade union. The rivalry between these two Union leaders has been rather recent. Both seem to have a strong following among the railwaymen. And a single union for railwaymen is an event heartily to be wished for.

### **Conclusion**

Trade Unionism in India is passing through a period of unrest and imbalance on its stage to adulthood. But there is definitely the trend towards the large, national, industry-wise trade union. There is also the tendency towards the formation of single unions on a national scale. The fight for wages and better working conditions however still forms the essential basic issues on which trade unions strike or threaten to strike. A more mellowed community outlook is missing. The sense of adult responsibility has still to be created. And if this seems to take a long time in forming, the reason may be that economic conditions for the worker have not softened, or that the attitudes of management have not changed. Industrial peace does not depend on labour alone. It depends greatly on the other partner in production, the employer and also the chief authority in society, the state, to ensure the conditions of peaceful co-existence. Sometimes there is the tendency to judge labour harshly against the background of industrial conflict, but it has been well said that Management gets the Union it deserves. There is no better teacher than experience

and the unions and their leaders will slowly learn in the hard school of conflict and strife that it pays to compromise and agree, that the purpose of unionism is essentially better wages, better working conditions and better living conditions, and that this purpose can be secured without dependence on politicians and political parties. Enlightened membership and union leaders from the rank and file with a constructive programme will soon put the unions on a sound basis and enable them to fulfil the function they are called to play in the democratic society of the present day.

A. Fonseca.

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## *Family Wages*

Social apostles are but too often satisfied with polysyllabic gargles extracted from ciceronian encyclicals or marxist pamphlets. Quite a few, especially among the younger generation, do not feel shy of a mathematical analysis of their prescriptions for social ills. One of their most crucial problems relates to the question of family wages, more particularly to the family wages due in commutative justice. The problem to be solved can be worded as follows: What is the economic equivalent of a just minimum family wage? What is the lowest real wage on which an adult labourer can adequately meet ordinary domestic needs and below which a wage cannot descend without involving a sin of injustice demanding restitution? Evidently such a wage varies with economic conditions, and it would be inappropriate to fix the same level

in most of the Sahara as in Detroit. Not only must economic considerations be taken into account, but even psychological factors should come in; living depends not only on biological necessities, but its standard varies with a sense of self-dignity, equality and liberty; in certain circumstances, some privations make life intolerable which are not felt by millions of other men. What complicates matters is not only the difficulty of assessing biological and psychological needs according to regions and economies, but the trouble of finding a monetary expression for such needs, particularly at a time when prices are liable to the various pressures of national and international conditions. In view of circumstances as obtain in India, one renounces the attempt at finding a firm monetary equivalent of the minimum wage due to an adult labourer in *commutative justice*. Possibly, however, the difficulty might leave some younger moralists undeterred by the difficulty of the task, but it will help them to analyse some few data which should serve as signposts on their way: family, family consumption, family income.

### **The Family**

The 1951 Census took great pains to define its terms and to analyse the composition of the population.<sup>(1)</sup> A house was taken as "a building within which people lived; provided that, if different parts

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(1) Cf. Vol. 1, Part I-A and Part II-A. It must be noted that West Bengal had a different definition of a house, and that Bihar did not take the household data. For the other regions, the household data were taken by the sample method, and a sampling error is unavoidable. But the Census data are the only ones available, and give a fair picture of the pattern of living.

of the building were structurally separated and provided with separate main entrances so as to give independent access to each separate part, then each such part was to be recognised and numbered as a separate house".

On the other hand, a "household was a group of people who lived together and took their food from a common kitchen".

According to the Census records, there are 112 households in every 100 houses of a typical village and 124 in a typical town. On the other hand, in every hundred households of the village there are 491 persons, whilst in the town the number reaches only 471. Out of the 491 persons in every hundred households, there are 252 men and 239 women, whilst in the towns (agglomerations of 5,000 and over), the 471 people in every hundred households count 248 men and 223 women, so that there is an excess of men over women, particularly in towns.

A household is not the same as a family; it often includes, besides husband, wife and children, people related by blood, marriage or adoption, or at times unrelated to the head of the household. The Census gives interesting details about the average composition per hundred households, both rural and urban. For each hundred households there are out of the 171 heads, 90 men (71 married, 19 widowers), 10 head-women, and 71 wives of heads. Those heads of household have 189 children (108 sons and 81 daughters). In the hundred households, one finds 120

relatives of the heads (48 men and 72 women) other than sons or daughters. Finally there are seven persons unrelated to the heads (4 men and 3 women). Undoubtedly those extra persons have good reasons to seek shelter in the household and have a claim on the heads ; but they are not part and parcel of the family which should be covered by the just family wage, and the employer is not bound to take them into account when fixing minimum wages, though he should assist them out of a sense of social obligation of charity, or equity.

The composition of households varies somewhat with the various geographical zones into which the Census divided the country. These regions are made up in the following way : North India is limited to Uttar Pradesh, North West India covers Rajasthan, Punjab, Patiala, Pepsu, Jammu and Kashmir, Ajmer, Delhi, Bilaspur and Himachal Pradesh. East India comprises Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Assam, Manipur and Sikkim ; South India, Madras, Mysore and Kerala ; West India, Bombay, Saurashtra and Kutch ; Central India, Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, Hyderabad, Bhopal.

The total number of persons related to the head of the household (other than children) was 137 per hundred households in North India, 132 in North West India, 119 in Central India, and 109 in South India, whilst the unrelated persons living in the households were 4 in Central India, 5 in the South, 7 in West India, 13 in North India and just 1 in North West India. In each zone, the number of sons exceeds the

number of daughters, by as many as 34 in North and North West India and as few as 22 in the South. As the Census zones are geographical and do not coincide with distinct economic regions, they cannot be taken into account to differentiate automatically between the family consumption levels and the family wages, and one must be resigned to estimates related to the average for the whole country.

### **Family Consumption**

The problem of estimating the basic expenditure of an average family on its basic needs is arduous <sup>(2)</sup>. The usual method is to reduce the family consumption into consumption units, the unit being the consumption of a hypothetical male adult; the reduction coefficients vary with ages, and authors. Lusk, whose scale is adopted in many countries, gives the following consumption ratios: men above 14, 1.00; women above 14, 0.83; children between 10 & 14, 0.83; children between 6 & 10, 0.70; children between 1 & 6, 0.50; children below 1 year, 0.00.

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(2) Cf. S. B. L. Nigam, *State Regulation of Minimum Wages*, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1955. —

D. R. Gadgil, *Poona, A Socio-economic Survey*, Poona, Gokhale Institute, 1945. —

N. V. Sovani, D. P. Apte, R. G. Pendse, *Poona: A Re-survey*, Poona, Gokhale Institute, 1956. —

V. M. Dandekar, *Use of Food Surpluses for Economic Development*, Poona, Gokhale Institute, 1956. —

Raghuray Singh, *Movement of Industrial Wages in India*, Bombay, Asia Publishing House, 1955. —

I. L. O. India Branch, *Recent Developments in Certain Aspects of Indian Economy*, III, New Delhi, 1956. etc.

The Gokhale Institute in their Poona Survey and Re-survey adopted another scale: Adult Male (over 14 years) 1.0; adult female (over 14) 0.875; child of 5 to 14 years 0.625; child below 5 years 0.375.<sup>(3)</sup>

Such scales are based not on total expenditure, but on food consumption, and on the idea that the need for food is proportionate to the need for calories; the scales do not take into account the difference in kind of calories, nor the individual foods. In spite of these deficiencies, the procedure is adopted for all family enquiries and is necessary in a comparative study of food requirements.

Taking the Census data per thousand households (4,871 persons and rounding off the number to 5,000), and applying the Indian percentages of age-groups in the general population, one arrives at the conclusion that each household contains 4.03 adult units of consumption (Lusk scale). <sup>(4)</sup>

If from this population of the 1000 households we exclude the 484 male relatives and the 720 female

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(3) Dr. Aykroyd of the Indian Food Research Association proposes the scale: adult male (over 14), 1.0, adult female (over 14), 0.8; child of 12 & 13 years, 0.8; child 10 & 11 years, 0.7; child 8 & 9 years, 0.6; child 6 & 7 years, 0.5; child 4 & 5 years, 0.4.

(4) The Census age-groups for the general population are distributed according to the following percentages: 0 to 1 year, 3.3; 1 to 4, 10.2; 5 to 14, 24.8; 15 to 34, 33.0; 35 to 54, 20.4; 54 and over, 8.3.



relatives, as well as the 68 non-relatives, the total number of persons in the families is only 3,599. On this basis, the method reveals that each average family contains only 2.89 adult units of consumption on the Lusk scale. The scale adopted in the Poona Survey would conclude to only 2.77 adult consumption units.

### ***Translating Consumption Units***

One may feel satisfied after having rounded off family consumption to units, but the problem of wages remains unsolved, even about mere food consumption, as the unit is somewhat elastic. Even when one has noted that the Nutrition Advisory Committee (Govt. of India, Health Bulletin No 23) recommends that the adult male worker should have 2,400 calories for light and sedentary work, 3,000 calories for moderate work and 3,600 calories for very hard work, one is left with the difficulty of framing a suitable diet easily available to our labouring classes.

The Nutrition Advisory Committee in 1944 suggested the following items for the daily standard of the adult unit in ounces: cereals 14; pulses 3; leafy vegetables 4; other vegetables 6; ghee and oil 2; milk and milk products 10; meat, fish, eggs 4; fruits, nuts 3; sugar, jaggery, 2. But a survey of over 800 diet studies carried by V. M. Dandekar<sup>(5)</sup> reveals that close to eighty per cent of those diets studied all over India are badly deficient. Considering the difficulty of suggesting proper substitutes and comparing prices which vary from region to region, as well as the insufficient production of food in the country, one

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(5) V. M. Dandekar, op. cit. pp. 9 sqq.

is tempted to give up all attempts at calculating on a solid basis the monetary expression of the standard diet or even of the usual healthy diet of the consumption adult unit.

From the data supplied by the Agricultural Labour Enquiry, 1950-51, the agricultural household spends on food as much as 84 per cent of its total expenditure<sup>(6)</sup>, and the Industrial worker's household only 65 per cent<sup>(7)</sup>. Such percentages betray conditions of poverty<sup>(8)</sup>.

The recent rise in food prices is a clear sign that those conditions have not improved, and that from the point of view of the masses, it is regrettable that the Five Year Plans have not directed more efforts to the immediate increase of food production in the country. The Eastern Economist (19-7-57) mentioned that the Planning Commission's study group submitted a note to the July All-India Labour Conference and defined the minimum wage as covering three consumption units per earner with no reduction on account of earnings of the worker's wife and children; the consumption unit would involve a net daily intake of 2,700 calories of food, 18 yards of cloth per annum, and housing according to the requirements of the Standard Labour Committee; thus 20 per cent of the total wage would be for miscellaneous items like fuel and lighting, medical requirements etc. But the

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(6) V. M. Dandekar, *op. cit.* pp. 30 sqq.

(7) Recent Developments . . . . . p. 94.

(8) Cf. Four Maunds of Rice, *The New Review*, January 147 — *International Labour Review*, Dec. 1956. pp. 585 sqq.

editor cautioned us that the theoretical discussion of the concept and the content of a fair wage or a minimum wage cannot take us far since a number of marginal or sub-marginal undertakings do not have the capacity of paying even the minimum wage. One might add that there are also capitalists who do not possess the marginal willingness to play their part in India's social progress.

It is only on the basis of social cooperation between all that the problem of increased production and equitable distribution can be solved so that a family living wage becomes a reality and a habit.

A. Lallemand

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## Documentation

### INTERNATIONAL ORDER

(Introduction: In 1956, Pope Pius XII, in several of his addresses and speeches, made many direct references to the International Order. When in October, 1956, events in both Eastern Europe and the Middle East threatened world peace, he made an appeal for justice and peace on November 10th to the Heads of Governments. He pointed out how the peoples of the earth desired peace and liberty, and how this is frustrated by "illegal and brutal repressions". Earlier in the year in his Easter Message, he drew attention to the true foundations of a lasting peace: faith and trust. In his Christmas message the Holy Father insisted that no peace can be built on materialism, and the need of individuals and nations understanding that "peace is the fruit of men's efforts, but also a precious gift of God". In the Encyclical *Laetamur Admodum*, Nov. 1st., Pius XII made it clear that war settles nothing.)

### ***The Foundations of Peace***

Unshaken trust is an indispensable condition to the triumph of peace. Those, therefore who allow themselves to bend before a pessimism which is cleverly diffused, and finds expression in the cheap saying, "Its all of no use", are surely not partisans of peace.

Nor those others who see only what is still lacking, what has not yet been fully achieved, and readily lend an ear to the whisperings of those sowing discontent. They close their eyes to much already accomplished in the reform of the social and economic order, by which they too profit, — advantages frequently obtained through exhausting labour to overcome almost insurmountable obstacles.

The true friends of peace must know how to react interiorly to such insinuations, and be persuaded that it is precisely on the weak points of man — his pessimism, his cupidity, his envy, his urge towards unfounded criticism, — now one, now another of these passions, and arouses one or the other, threatening or cajoling; today harshly withdrawing, tomorrow making an approach; today announcing a new system, to return tomorrow to the old.

On the other hand, dear children, you must note that true peace is not a state of repose like death, but rather the power and activity of life. Hence it follows that the more exalted the being, and the more intense the operation, the deeper ought to appear the harmony of peace, which consequently is not opposed to any activity. It rather creates the conditions which are most suitable for the progress of every work, in the arts, economics, politics and science. Indeed it is well known to all how some rapid and far-reaching results of human achievements can actually create anxieties and fears in men, putting in grave danger their individual and social life.

( *Easter Message*, 1956 )

### **War settles nothing**

As a matter of fact, 'the weapons of your warfare are not carnal, but powerful before God'. Our hope rests solely with Him who with His heavenly light can illuminate the minds of men and bend their angered wills to more moderate counsels so that right order may be established between nations to their greater mutual advantage, safeguarding always the legitimate rights of all those involved. May all men, especially those who hold the fate of peoples in their hands, keep in mind that no permanent good can come of a war, but only a greater number of misfortunes and calamities.

Quarrels between men cannot be settled by armies, massacre or ruin, but only through reason, lawfulness, prudence and justice. When wise men driven by the desire of peace gather to deal with such grave problems, they must undoubtedly feel compelled to choose the way of justice and not venture on the steep slope of violence, if they consider the great dangers of a war which from a small spark could burst into an enormous fire.

(*Encyclical, Laetamur Admodum, Rome, Nov. 1st., 1956*)

### **The Need of Truth**

On this score We must with deepest sadness mourn the help given by some Catholics, both ecclesiastical and lay, to the tactics of obfuscation calculated to bring about a result that they themselves did not intend. How can they fail to see that such is the aim of all that insincere activity which hides under the name of "talks" and "meetings"? Why enter a discussion for that matter without a common language or how is it possible to meet if the paths are divergent, i.e. if one party rejects or denies the common absolute values, thereby making all "co-existence in truth" unattainable? Out of respect for the very name of Christian, compliance with such tactics should cease, for as the Apostle tells us it is inconsistent to wish to sit at the table of God and at that of his enemies. And if there still be any vacillating spirits, notwithstanding the black testimony of ten years of cruelty, the blood just shed and the immolation of many lives sacrificed by a martyred people, should finally convince them.

Still it is remarked that bridges must not be cut, mutual relations must rather be preserved. But for this whatever responsible government and political leaders judge they must do by way of contracts and mutual relations for humanity's peace and not for private interests is enough. That is sufficient which competent ecclesiastical authority decides it should do to gain recognition of the Church's rights and freedom.

### ***The cause of peace : truth and courage***

Unpleasant realities force us to set forth the terms of the struggle in clear language, no one can properly accuse us of favouring the stiffening of opposing blocks, and still less of having in some fashion abandoned that mission of peace which flows from Our Apostolic Office. Rather, if We kept silence We would have to fear the judgement of God. We remain closely allied to the cause of peace, and God alone knows how much We yearn to be able to announce it in full and happy tones with the angels of Christmas. But precisely in order to protect it from the present threats, We must point out where the danger lies, the tactics of the enemies and what marks them as such. Not otherwise did the new-born Son of God, Himself infinite goodness, unhesitatingly draw clear lines of demarcation and face death on behalf of truth.

We are convinced that today too in the face of an enemy determined to impose on all peoples, in one way or another, a special and intolerable way of life, only the unanimous and courageous behaviour of all who love the truth and the good can preserve peace and will preserve it. It would be a fatal error to repeat what in similar circumstances happened during the years preceding the second world war, when all the threatened nations and not merely the smallest, sought their safety at the expense of others, using them as shields, so to speak, and even seeking very questionable economic and political advantages from their neighbour's sufferings. In the end all together were overwhelmed in the holocaust.

### **Wrong Exercise of Sovereignty**

No one expects or demands the impossible, not even from the United Nations. But one should have a right to expect that their authority should have had its weight, at least through observers, in the places in which the essential values of man are in extreme danger. Although the United Nations' condemnation of the grave violations of the rights of men and of entire nations is worthy of recognition, one can nevertheless wish that in similar cases the exercise of their rights, as members of this organisation be denied to States which refuse even the admission of observers — thus showing that their concept of State sovereignty threatens the very foundations of the United Nations. This organisation ought to have the right and the power of forestalling all military intervention of one State against another, whatever be the pretext under which it is effected, and also the right and power of assuming by means of a sufficient police force the safeguarding of order in the State which is threatened.

### **General Disarmament and new methods of control**

If We allude to these defects it is because We desire to see strengthened the authority of the United Nations, especially for effecting general disarmament, which We have so much at heart, and on which We have already spoken in other discourses. In fact, only in the ambit of an institution like the United Nations can the promise of individual nations to reduce armaments, and especially to abandon the production and the use of certain arms, be mutually exchanged under the strict obligation of international law. Likewise, only the United Nations is at present in a position to exact the observance of this obligation by assuming effective control of the armaments of all nations without exception. Its exercise of aerial observation will assure certain and effective knowledge of the production and military preparedness for war with relative ease, while avoiding the disadvantages to which the presence of foreign troops in a country can give rise. Indeed it seems almost miraculous what technical science has been able to attain in this field.

( Christmas Message, 1956 )

## *Social Trends*

### **Report of the ILO**

In his report that he submitted to the ILO's Fourth Asian Regional Conference, consisting of worker, employer and Government delegates from some 25 countries, Mr. David Morse, the Director of the International Labour Organisation, made the following important observations about the social and economic progress of Asia.

In general, the gap between living levels in Asia and the more highly developed countries had widened in the last few years, he maintained. On the other hand, economic and social growth is in progress and making slow but perceptible changes in the life of every country of the region. The first post-war decade has marked the beginning of a new era in Asia in the social and economic fields. In describing the general progress of development of Asian countries, he referred to India's Second Five Year Plan, which was launched in April 1956 and envisages a total investment of Rs. 62 thousand million. There are similar plans in Pakistan, Japan, Indonesia, the Philippine Republic, Nepal, Afganistan, Ceylon, the Federation of Malaya, British Borneo and Burma. These plans are rather ambitious and evidence the intensification of effort in the Asian countries to overcome the poverty that continues to plague their peoples. As far as basic development is concerned, emphasis has been placed on the development of agricultural resources and community development programmes. None the less, with the exception of Burma and Japan, during the first



phase of post-war development, the proportion of resources diverted to development purposes was rather small in most Asian countries in comparison with other parts of the world.

The Report points out that the main factors limiting development efforts in most Asian countries were inflation, the lack of external finance and the inability to mobilise fully domestic resources for economic reconstruction. As a rough average, in most of these countries, public capital formation during the last four years constituted less than one-half of the total capital formation.

### ***Agricultural Development Plans***

Practically all Asian countries have made progress with their agricultural development plans and the food situation has improved. "According to F. A. O. indices, with pre-war average as 100, the volume of agricultural output in the region (excluding the People's Republic of China) rose from a low average level of 104 during the period of 1948-53 to 119 in 1955-56. Continuing attention is being given by Asian countries to the problems of land reform, community development, co-operatives and handicrafts and small industries. The expansion of social services — especially education, health and housing — also deserves special mention. Such important changes as land nationalisation in Burma, land reforms in East Pakistan, and Japan, where tenancy has been practically abolished, the abolition of the *Zemindari* in Indian States and tenancy reforms in the Philippines are clear indications of the current political and social thinking in Asia and of

the increasing recognition that there must be improvements in the rural sector if agricultural production is to be increased and if the masses are to participate in economic and social development.

Reference is also made to the Bhoodan Movement of Vinoba Bhave in India, whereby landowners are asked to give up voluntarily a part of their land so that it may be distributed to the landless; and to the community development programme in India, the village aid programme in Pakistan, rural development societies in Ceylon, community schools in the Philippines. It is noted that the rural communities in Asia tend to expect that whatever is to be done for their improvement is the responsibility of the government or some outside agency. To change their passive attitude into one whereby people realise that they can do a good deal themselves without outside help is in itself a great and worthwhile task, says Mr. Morse.

### ***Industrial Production***

Development plans in Asia accord a high priority to investments in power and transport, rather than in manufacturing industry. In some countries, however, there has been a significant expansion of the latter. In India, the cement, chemical and engineering, and iron and steel industries production (with 1951 as 100) rose from 104 in 1952 to 130 in the first quarter of 1956. In Pakistan the index of industrial production covering 17 major industries (with 1950 as 100) rose from 258 in 1954 to 350 in 1955. Japan's industrial production has continued to increase rapidly.

Between 1948 and 1954 the growth of commodity output in South-East Asia was greater than in Latin

America, but the rate was much slower in comparison with the respective pre-war levels. In fact, by 1954, commodity output in South-East Asia on a per capita basis has not yet regained its pre-war level, although in most other parts of the world it was substantially above the pre-war level. "Thus the disparity in living levels between Asia and the rest of the world appears to have been widened. The closing of this gap is a main task for the future," warns the ILO Director General.

### ***Population Increases***

The employment situation in Asia is characterised by three main features. First, the rapid rate of population growth which is increasing at the rate of 12 million people per year and is now nearing 800 million. The labour force is thus increased by 8,500,000 new entrants each year. Second, the predominantly agricultural character of the work force, in which two-thirds or more of the workers still find employment. Third, the chronic and widespread underemployment combining with a recent tendency towards growing unemployment in urban areas. Unfortunately the pattern of economic activity is not changing fast enough to absorb these increases in manpower.

Underemployment is particularly serious in the agricultural sphere and the number of unemployed has tended to rise during recent years. Unemployment in India appears to be about 5,300,000 and estimates of the Finance Minister suggests that perhaps more than 10 million people are seriously underemployed. The high incidence of urban unemployment is due in part

to the marked drift of population to the cities. As a rule, this movement has been unorganised and has brought many social and economic problems.

Among the problems that Asian employment service operations have to face, the lack of employment opportunities is the chief factor. Other problems are the shortage of skill among the applicants, inadequate labour mobility, and the progressive technological improvement in industry, which some people fear may spread unemployment.

### ***Lack of Human Skills***

In a number of Asian countries, shortages of skilled labour, supervisors, technicians and managers are regarded as amongst the main factors limiting the development of the economy. In India, it is estimated that more than 500,000 skilled craftsmen will be needed for the implementation of the Second Five-Year Plan. The six-year development plan of Burma will also require some 32,000 skilled workers. Similar problems are facing Ceylon, Pakistan and most of the other Asian countries.

To solve these problems, the authorities and various industrial organisations are establishing new institutions for technical training at an advanced and intermediate level, and courses for supplementary training of management and supervisory staff. Action is also being taken to improve the level of technical skill among industrial workers and apprenticeship schemes for the in-plant training of youths are being organised in a number of factories. Afghanistan, India,

Indonesia and Pakistan are establishing institutes of technology for the training of future managers. Further training-within-industry programmes have been set up in Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan and Singapore. Several countries have taken steps to develop more extensive apprenticeship training and vocational training programmes in agriculture. In the words of Mr. Morse, "Few things are, in my view, so important to the future of Asia as the gradual raising of the levels of human skill and the gradual expansion of the effective demand for it.... Unless there is a substantial improvement in the level of education, in Asia, the gap between the highly industrialised countries and the less developed ones will remain as wide or become even wider than it is today."

### **Conditions of Work**

Progress relating to the improvement of wages and other conditions of work in Asia have been uneven. Collective Bargaining is still exceptional. In so far as wages are concerned, since the last Asian Regional Conference, a good deal has been done in various countries to extend the protection of minimum wages, to improve wage standards, and to overcome administrative difficulties.

The report notes the considerable increase of trade union concern with wage questions, which reflects the growing strength of the trade union movement and its preoccupation with wage problems. "However," says Mr. Morse, "government action *per se* and trade union pressures can influence the general level

of real wages only to a limited extent. The principal determinants of the level of real wages are the productivity of labour and the supply of consumers' goods."

Several Asian countries have taken action on the problems of hours of work and holidays, welfare facilities, protection of women, young workers, tribal populations, and backward classes, as well as in the fields of occupational safety and health and labour inspection.

In the field of social security slow but steady progress has been a marked feature of the last four years in spite of difficulties arising from the problems of poverty, over-population, a general shortage of doctors and medical services and especially because a very large part of the population is made up of rural or agricultural workers who are difficult to cover by social security schemes. Despite these obstacles, the Philippines and Thailand have recently adopted social security laws; Indonesia, with ILO assistance, is studying plans for the gradual introduction of a social security system. In India the Social Security Act of 1948 has been extended to new geographical areas. Burma's Act of 1954 is now being gradually implemented.

### ***Labour-Management Relations***

Progress of industrial developments will have an impact on labour-management relations. Although the proportion of the labour force in industry is very small (10% or less in all countries except Japan) and has

tended to remain the same in the past fifty years, the situation is changing with the gradual industrialisation of the region and will create the conditions for collective relations between labour and management. This fact has already been recognised by India's Second Five-Year Plan and Pakistan's First Five-Year Plan, both of which emphasise the importance of fostering labour-management co-operation in achieving their social objectives.

Trade Unions have been growing continuously. Indonesian Trade Union membership now stands at over 4 million. In the Philippines, trade union membership is reported to have increased from 150,000 in 1953 to 750,000 in 1955. In Burma, Ceylon, India, Japan, Pakistan and Viet-Nam, trade union membership has also expanded. This factor is having an effect on the changing labour-management situation in Asia and it seems likely that industrial disputes may show a tendency to increase in number. This may explain the recent display of interest in several Asian countries in machinery and techniques for the prevention and settlement of disputes.

Another significant development in Asia in the spread of the movement for the education of trade unionists and workers in general. In the Philippines several training courses have been organised. Similar action is being taken by Japan, India, Pakistan and Burma.

A. F.

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## Social Survey

### Ambar Charkha

The Ambar Charkha programme is being pursued with vigour by the Government. During 1957-58 it is estimated that the Charkhas would produce 5.5 million pounds of yarn and 20 million yards of cloth.

The Commission in charge of the programme will set up 100 additional *Saranjam Karyalayas* to manufacture 105,000 charkhas, 10 additional *vidyalayas* to train 3,200 *Karyakartas* and 1,600 carpenters, a suitable number of *Ambar Shiksha Vargs* to train 110,000 spinners. Of the 105,000 new charkhas to be manufactured during the course of the year 75,000 will be distributed. During the period April to August 1957, 37,904 charkhas were manufactured. Of these the largest number, (9,711) were manufactured in Bombay State. Bombay State has the largest number of Charkhas (41,608) and Kerala the least (565).  
(Economic Review)

### Maithon Dam

The third of the four dams to be constructed during the first phase of the Damodar Valley Project was inaugurated by the Prime Minister on September 27th of this year. The dam is situated at a place called Maithon across the Barakar River. Like the other two — Tilaya and Konar — the new dam also is a multi-purpose one. Besides controlling the floods caused by torrential rains, the dam will supply water for irrigation and the production of power. Here are some statistics about the dam taken from the Economic Review.

The height above river-bed	162 feet
Length	16,112 feet
Area of the reservoir	41.4 sq. miles
Length of back water	16 river miles
Storage	
Maximum at flood stage	1,200,000 acre feet
Normal storage level	664,000 acre feet
Power plant	
Installed capacity	60,000 KW



### Loans

India borrowed from the World Bank, during the financial year which ended on June 30 an aggregate of 35.4 million dollars. Since the Bank began its operation India has received loans amounting to \$ 238.8 millions. The three loans received last year were for the expansion of the Indian Iron and Steel Company, Air-India and the Trombay Power plant.

The Finance Minister of the Union spent several weeks in America and Europe trying to raise loans to enable the Government to push through the various Second Five Year Plan schemes. So far no loans have been granted but some help is likely to come.

It is quite certain now that the Plan will be trimmed. It was, as is admitted by all, a little over-ambitious considering our resources. We cannot abandon the Plan unless we want to perpetuate the poverty and misery of the Indian masses. With some wise pruning and better management of our available resources we should be able to fulfil most of the targets. That the people of the country are enthusiastic and keen on the Plan is clear from the ease with which various State Governments were able to raise loans in the open market.

### Criminals All

It is estimated that there are some 4,000,000 persons in India who were branded as criminals up to August 31, 1951, merely because they happened to be members of certain Tribes. For some reason or other these people used to live on crime. The British rulers, to control them effectively, declared them all Criminal Tribes by passing an Act called the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871. This Act was amended from time to time up to 1924 making its provisions more stringent. Free India repealed the Act and began to treat them as full and free citizens of India. In the First Five Year Plan a sum Rs. 3.5 crores was set apart for their rehabilitation. The Second Plan has a provision of Rs. 2.94 crores. The Govern-

ments, both Central and State, have granted them land and loans under certain conditions to enable them to build houses, start small scale industries and learn new and useful trades. During the Second Plan period 15,246 families will be settled by building for them over 8,000 houses. Christian missionaries in various parts of India have done much to rehabilitate these people and have achieved splendid results. They have been at it for more than half a century.

### **Gramdan**

Since the Gramdan Conference, which was held on September 21 and 22 at Yelwal in Mysore and attended by all the top leaders of India the movement is very much in the news. The Government of India, much influenced as it is by the report of some of the commission who visited China to study the Collective Farm system there, has been trying to establish such farms here in India. We, of course, call them Cooperatives. Since we are wedded to democracy which is different from the Communist variety, we can have only Cooperative farms whose essence is voluntary participation. Gramdan or the donation of a whole village, is also a voluntary act of the villagers. Since it is not quite easy to find enough volunteers to pool their resources together to run cooperative farms Gramdan villages afford better opportunities for starting Cooperative farms as envisaged by Government. Hence Government's whole hearted support to the Gramdan Movement.

Though Gramdan is the voluntary gift of the whole village by the villagers to the Movement the question remains whether such a gift is really voluntary. Since in Gramdan a man parts with his private property, to which he has an inalienable right, he should be absolutely free. It is reported that, at least in some cases, some of the proprietors are forced, by circumstances, to part with their land. This, of course, cannot be tolerated. Besides it is said that a person who gives away his property is free to claim it back. In theory it may be so but in practice it is going to be a very difficult proposition. Once cooperative farming begins in

earnest how is one going to withdraw ? The theory of majority vote cannot be applied to Gramdan ; it must be unanimous.

The Community Projects are asked to concentrate their efforts on Gramdan villages as it will be much easier to get the cooperation of the villagers in these units. As long as a man is not forcibly, whether the force used is physical or moral, deprived of his private property, we cannot condemn the Movement. Whether the Movement will ever achieve all that it claims it will is a moot problem best left to the future.

### **P. & T. Department**

The Post and Telegraph Department's annual report for 1955-56 gives some very interesting statistics which show the all-round progress made by this essential service.

During the year under consideration the number of post offices rose from 49,740 at the beginning to 55,042 at the close of the year. Of the 5,795 new post offices opened during the year 5,472 (94.4 per cent) were to serve the rural areas. The number of telephone exchanges rose from 5,049 to 5,830 and telegraph offices from 8,792 to 9,893. A total of 2,997 million articles were carried by post, 33.5 million telegrams were sent out and 18.6 million effective trunk calls were put through during 1955-56.

The revenue of the department increased by 8.46 per cent over the previous year, from Rs. 46.6 crores to Rs. 50.6 crores. The expenditure amounted to Rs. 47.20 crores.

The mails were carried by planes, trains, buses, cycles, boats, steamers, camels, horses, various types of carriages and runners. The route mileage for mails, in addition to air routes, was 243,482 of which about 20 per cent was covered by railways, 26 per cent by motor services, 52 per cent by runners and the remaining 2 per cent by various other methods.

During the year under review stamps and stationery issued to post offices by treasuries amounted to 260,236,893. The number of money orders carried was 65 million involving the movement of Rs. 231.6 crores. 8,981,000 V. P. articles,

and 4,693,000 insured articles were carried during the year. The Dead Letter Offices handled 13,991,000 articles of which 91 per cent were delivered either to the addressees or their senders.

The year under review was noted for expansion of services in all directions. For instance the number of telephones increased from 247,000 to 278,000, telegraph lines from 116,505 to 122,296; overhead bronze and iron wires from 826,708 miles to 867,199 miles, cables from 8,618 to 9,180 miles and copper conductors from 922,202 to 1,003,437.

The Indian language telegraph service in the Devanagari script was extended to 270 telegraph offices bringing the total number of such offices to 937.

The Department maintained 108 wireless stations, which besides being stand-bys for the telegraph and telephone sections, transmit and receive messages for meteorological services, news agencies and afford seasonal communication facilities in flood-affected and remote areas.

The total number of radio licences issued amounted to 1,095,571 in 1955-56.

The Savings Bank section too has shown remarkable progress. During the year 1,187,205 new accounts were opened and 582,272 accounts were closed. The number of active accounts at the end of the year was 5,384,147. The balance in the Bank rose to Rs. 293 crores. The average balance at the credit of a depositor on March 31st, 1956, was Rs. 490.1 as compared with Rs. 476.4 at the close of the previous year. (*Economic Review*).

### **Transport**

In spite of all the progress made in the last decade or so in road transport, India has still about 10 million bullock carts. During 1955-56 it is estimated that they carried about 125 million tons, 10 million tons more than what our railways hauled during the same period.

Vast sums of money are being spent in every State for laying good roads and improving the transport system. The express bus services run in many States, where nationalised transport exists, is a great boon to the travelling public.

The Integral Coach Factory in Madras is being expanded in order to augment production. It is expected that when the project is completed the factory will turn out 700 coaches a year, which is twice the original target.

### **Tribals**

With a view to equip Tribal students to acquire technical skill for industrial purposes the M. P. Government has decided to set up two Production-cum Training Centres, one each at Mandla and Raipur respectively. The Mandla centre will impart training in 11 trades including blacksmithy, carpentry, handloom weaving and laquerware. It will cost the Government Rs. 64,400 during the current financial year.

The Raipur Centre will impart training in 10 trades and will cost Rs. 64,300.

Besides these, six Training-cum-Production Centres in leather goods, under the centrally sponsored scheme, have also been sanctioned by the M. P. Government. The State will also have 13 Health units for the Tribal areas.

### **Industrial Workers**

The Bombay Government has drawn up a scheme to open centres for the training of workers who wish to improve their efficiency in their present jobs or to qualify themselves for higher jobs.

Under the scheme, during the Second Plan period 250 industrial workers will be given training in a two-year course to improve their skill and another 200 in a five-year course to improve their prospects. A sum of Rs. 543,750 is to be spent on this scheme. During the current year 100 workers will be admitted to the first and 50 to the second course.

### **Municipal Elections**

In the elections, held towards the end of October in U. P. for the municipal boards, the Congress Party suffered serious reverses. Only in 29 out of the 104 municipal boards to which elections were held has the Congress won absolute majorities, while emerging as the largest single group in 39 other boards. Out of the 2,222 seats for which elections were held the Congress won only 856. The other parties too have fared badly. The number of seats won by the various Parties are as follows: P. S. P. 178, Socialist 48, C. P. I. 27, Jan Sangh 168 and the U. P. P. F. (United People's Progressive Party) 127. The Independents bagged 789.

It is said that most of the Independents are dissident Congressmen. If so these are likely to merge with the Congress Party, or at least work with it, when the election of chairmen comes. According to one report most of the Independents received strong support from the Communists who, for reasons best known to themselves, did not put up their own candidates. The future will tell.

### **Provident Fund**

With the bringing under the Employees' Provident Scheme coffee curing establishments in the country another 3,600 workers will be entitled to provident fund benefits. The Employees' Provident Funds Act (1952) has been extended to 26 industries, some plantations, mines and newspaper establishments. In all about 2,400,000 are getting provident fund benefits under the Act.

### **After-Care**

The Central Social Welfare Board will establish 9 State Homes and 45 district shelters for the after-care of persons discharged from correctional institutions and women rescued from moral danger. Of these one Home and 2 shelters have been sanctioned for Himachal Pradesh, 3 district shelters for Kerala, 3 State Homes and 10 shelters for Bombay and 5 State Homes and 30 district shelters for Uttar Pradesh. The total number of institutions sanctioned so far is 28 State Homes and 86 district shelters.

### **Blind Women**

The first training centre for adult blind women was inaugurated on September 30 at Dehra Dun. The Centre will train ultimately hundred women who will form a section of the training centre for the adult blind women at Dehra Dun. To begin with, training will be given to 20 persons in Bharati Braille, knitting and caning. In the next few months facilities for training in simple mechanical operations are also expected to be provided at the Centre. Training also will be provided in many other useful trades which the women can easily adopt. Those who have had no education will be taught the three Rs. The medium of instruction will be Hindi and the normal period of training two years. A sum of Rs. 15,000,000 has been provided during the Second Plan period for the education and rehabilitation of all categories of physically handicapped persons.

### **Textiles**

The Indian Textiles Industry operates 450 production units, employs 800,000 workers in principal and another 650,000 in subsidiary employments and produces 5,102 million yards (1955-56) of cloth worth over Rs. 550 crores. The workers earned during the year about Rs. 100 crores. The Second Plan target for textile production is 8,500 million yards. Indian fabrics have improved in quality considerably during the past few years. They are very popular in foreign markets.

### **Article 311 (2)**

The Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, by a majority decision, has ruled that Article 311 (2) provides protection against dismissal, removal or reduction in rank of a Government servant only when such dismissal, removal or reduction in rank is brought about by way of punishment and not otherwise.

This ruling was given by the Supreme Court while dismissing the appeal preferred by Parshotam Lai Dhingra who had contended that his reversion from the post of officiating assistant superintendent of railway telegraphs to that of the Chief Controller — from class II service to his

substantive post in class III service — amounted to reduction in rank, and as it was done without giving him an opportunity to show cause against the action proposed in regard to him, his reversion violated Article 311 (2) of the Constitution.

Article 311 (2) reads: "No such person (a civil servant in the employ of the Central or State Government) shall be dismissed or removed or reduced in rank until he has been given a reasonable opportunity of showing cause against the action proposed to be taken against him :"

In three given cases the Constitution itself states that the above quoted clause will not apply. Cf. Art. 311 (2) part 2.

The Chief Justice delivering the judgement of the Court said that the article applied only in cases where dismissal, removal or reduction in rank was by way of punishment. To determine when an order for termination of service inflicted a punishment and when it did not, a test should be applied to ascertain whether the Government servant had a right to the post he had been holding. If the Government servant had the right then the termination of his service would by itself be a punishment and he would be entitled to the protection of Article 311 (2). If the Government had, by contract, expressed or implied, or under the rules, the right to terminate the employment at any time, then such termination in the manner provided by the contract or the rules would not be a punishment and would not attract the provisions of Article 311.

His Lordship said that if termination of service or reduction in rank was sought on the basis of misconduct, negligence or inefficiency than it would be a punishment and requirements of the Article 311 would have to be complied with.

In the present case, the Court held, that the applicant's reversion from an officiating post to his substantive post did not amount to reduction of rank by way of punishment and, therefore, the provisions of article 311 did not apply.

His Lordship added that an appointment to a post, permanent or temporary, on probation or on officiating basis or



a substantive appointment to a temporary post gave to a government servant no right to the post and his service could be terminated unless his service had ripened into what was in the service rules called a quasi-permanent service.

Mr. Justice Bose in his dissenting judgement allowed the appeal saying, "I do not think that the gist of the matter in either the form of the action or the procedure followed nor do I think that it is relevant to determine what operated in the mind of a particular officer (whether an action was taken as a punishment or otherwise). The real hurt does not lie in any of those things, but in the consequences that follow, and in my judgement the protections of Article 311 are not against harsh words, but against hard blows. It is the effect of the order alone that matters, and in my judgement Article 311 applies whenever any substantial evil follows over and above a purely "contractual one".

By virtue of the majority judgment the appeal was dismissed. (*Statement*)

### Nurses

The Indian Nursing Council (Amendment) Bill, 1956 has been passed by the Rajya Sabha after a brief discussion. In our November issue we had given a short account of this new law but, owing to lack of space, the printer had to leave out a portion. We shall here reproduce the material omitted with a few additional remarks.

The Amending Act introduces a new section to the old law, 15 A, which is a great boon to nurses. Up to now the practice was that when a person obtained a diploma or certificate he or she had to register in the State where the diploma was obtained. Hereafter a Register will be maintained by the Central Government to be called the Indian Nurses Register, which will contain the names of all persons who are for the time being enrolled on any State Register. This Register will be kept up-to-date and it will be published from time to time in the Official Gazette in the prescribed manner.

A Schedule to the Act gives a list of authorities who are empowered to confer diplomas, certificates and degrees on

successful candidates. Whereas in 1947 there were only 34 such institutions there are at present 60. Of these 30 are for general nursing, 7 for midwifery, 14 for health visitors and 9 for higher qualifications. Among these there are some which are non-official bodies including several missionary organisations.

India's need for trained nurses is very great. It is said that we have something like 25,000, or a little more, nurses on our registers. This number surely includes the living and the dead as well as the "retired" ones. The Union Minister for Health said in Parliament that some 9000 nurses would be trained during the Second Plan period.

There was bitter criticism from several members in Parliament during the discussion of the Bill. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the former Minister for Health, said: "If there is one profession where sweated labour could be said to exist, it is the nursing profession." It is a notorious fact, that nurses are overworked and underpaid, especially in smaller hospitals and many private institutions. The hours of work vary from 8 to 12 hours and more. The hours of duty are arranged without any consideration to the needs of young growing women. It is quite common to see a girl on duty from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. or 2 a.m. to 9 a.m. and that for a fortnight or more. If this were to happen once or twice a year that would not matter much but when it occurs every two or three months it certainly tells on the health of the girls. Besides the living conditions in some places are deplorable and food supplied either unappetising or insufficient. The salaries are notoriously too small. A girl has gone through four years of specialised training before she is fully qualified. To give her a paltry salary of Rs. 80 or 90 plus "all found" is a crime especially when the "all found" is a huge hoax. We hope that Government will insist that nurses are better cared for. If we want more of our young women to come forward to undertake the care of our suffering brethren we should make the profession attractive and worthwhile. Pious lectures to girls to join the noble profession will cut little ice. Our young women are not that simple.

**F. C. Rodrigues**

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The I. I. S. O. was started at Poona on January 6, 1951 and is at present staffed by members of the Society of Jesus.

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